

Jeffers Engelhardt

Religious and Social Change in Estonian Musical Life and Music Scholarship

Some of the most noteworthy changes to have taken place in Estonian musical life and music scholarship since the late 1980s have centered around Christian musics.¹ Religious song festivals organized by the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Orthodox Church of Estonia, and the Union of Free Evangelical and Baptist Churches of Estonia have re-established a tradition of public amateur music-making. In the Estonian traditional (*pärimusmuusika*), jazz, and improvised music scenes, musicians have embraced folk chorales and church hymnody to create their own niche in the Estonian music industry. Newly restored churches have become one of the most important venues for concerts of choral music, Estonian traditional music, jazz and improvised musics, symphonic and chamber music, and paraliturgical and evangelistic musics. And projects to revise or publish new hymnals and service books are everywhere afoot.

These musical changes are part of broader late- and post-Soviet changes that have profoundly reshaped the Estonian spiritual landscape and involve religious renewal and revival, conversion, the restoration of religious spaces and institutions, missionary activity, new religious movements, and the influx of ideas, sounds, and capital from abroad. The changes in Estonian musical life and scholarship I am interested in here are rooted in and integral to the spiritual renewal and nationalist elation of the Singing Revolution (1987–1991), the surge in conversions, baptisms, confirmations, and church participation of the 1980s and 1990s, and the discursive and social transformations brought about by *glasnost*, *perestroika*, and the re-establishment of an Estonian state. Much of this coalesced in events surrounding the 1989 centenary and rehabilitation of Cyrillus Kreek (1889–1962), the composer, choral

¹This essay is a slightly modified and expanded version of my paper read at the 39th World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music in Vienna, Austria. I am most grateful to Joachim Braun and Kevin Karnes for their organizational work in putting that panel and this volume together.

conductor, teacher, arranger, and collector of folk hymnody and folk melodies who is a major figure in twentieth-century Estonian musical life.

It comes as no surprise that Estonian music scholarship has registered these changes, most notably in musicologists' ever-increasing attention to the study of Christian musics. Significant work has been done on folk hymnody (Humal 1989; Kõmmus 2001; Lippus 1988, 1993a, 1993b, 2003, 2006), nineteenth-century Lutheran chorale books (Siitan 1992, 1994, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2006), Protestant cantors in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Tallinn (Heinmaa 1999, 2004), musical institutions and ideologies in the Republican-era Lutheran Church (Kõlar 2002, 2003b), Orthodox syncretism in Seto traditional singing (Kalkun 2001; Sarv 2000), and the creation of indigenous Estonian Orthodox hymnody (Sarapuu 2003). In conjunction with religious leaders, scholars of religion, and ecclesial historians, musicologists have also collaborated in reassessing issues of identity and the practical, aesthetic, and theological dimensions of Christian musics in Estonia through a number of conferences and publications (Kõlar 2003a; Salumäe, et al. 2001). Finally, musicologists and folklorists have devoted more of their energies to the religious materials held in the Estonian Folklore Archives and the Estonian Theater and Music Museum (Kõmmus 2001: 75), and to teaching church music at the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church Theological Institute and the Viljandi Cultural Academy of Tartu University.

This move within the musicological disciplines creates continuity with pre-Soviet Estonian musicology and historiography and is clear evidence of broader changes in the post-Soviet production of humanistic knowledge. At the same time, much of this work constructs Estonian identity as essentially Protestant Lutheran, renders fluid confessional categories as concrete institutional entities, naturalizes the alignment of musical style with particular beliefs, practices, and theologies, and is ambivalent in its secular approach to Christian musics. Here, I suggest that the ecumenicity of Christian musics in Estonia challenges the disciplinary practices and institutional ideologies that frame recent scholarship. In this context, ecumenicity refers to the interconfessional, catholic, more universally Christian scale of certain musics; the opposite of

denominationally exclusive Christian musics. Engaging this ecumenicity means engaging interactions between official theologies and lay practices, performances of ethnolinguistic and religious identities, expressions of sentiment and belief, and ways of contesting distinctions between the sacred and secular. For historians and ethnographers, such engagement is vital in understanding the fullest spiritual and social significance of Christian musics in Estonia.

So in addition to being part of these late- and post-Soviet religious and social changes, how has Estonian music scholarship responded to these changes? What sorts of disciplinary practices and institutional ideologies are shaping the study of Christian musics in Estonia? How does the ecumenicity of Christian musics in Estonia complicate the situation? Here I give an overview of the significant body of late- and post-Soviet Estonian music scholarship dealing with Christian musics in order to shed light on these questions.

Late- and Post-Soviet Scholarship on Christian Musics in Estonia

The bulk of late- and post-Soviet scholarship on Christian musics in Estonia deals with the Protestant Lutheran traditions of Estonians and Baltic Germans. That these traditions are often glossed simply as “church music” (*kirikumuusika*) reflects the fact that the majority of institutionally affiliated Estonian Christians² belong to the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (EELC), the *de facto* national church whose public presence bolsters the mainstream association of Lutheranism and Estonianness. Thus, ecumenicity is not necessarily inherent in the language of Estonian music scholarship; by and large, the study of “church music” is the study of Protestant Lutheran music.

What is very much front and center in studies of “church music,” however, is sensitivity to and anxiety about the ways in which hymnody and religious concert music are or have become

²Here I am referring to ethnic Estonians, not to the Russian-speaking population in Estonia.

Estonian. Such sensitivities and anxieties are part of more thoroughgoing discourses emerging in the nineteenth century about Estonian national identity, Finno-Ugrianness, and Europeaness that articulate a deep ambivalence about Christian, German, and Russian influences of all kinds. Thus, the contributors to a 2002 volume celebrating the tenth anniversary of the new EELC hymnal each address the same provocative question: Whose songs do we sing? (*Kelle laule me laulame?*) (Salumäe, et al. 2001)

In that same volume, Toomas Siitan frames the question a different way: Does one study Estonian “church song” or “church song” in Estonia? (*Eesti kirikulaul või kirikulaul Eestis?*) (Siitan 2001) The ideological stakes are high in phrasing the question this way, since the derivative, non-indigenous character of the vast majority of the Lutheran hymnody he is concerned with chafes against the nationalist discourse of some Estonian music scholarship and ecclesial historiography. Siitan concludes his essay by making the necessary move toward a consideration of agency and practice – what he has elsewhere referred to as “ethnohymnology” (2003b: 97) – as a way of overcoming the pitfalls of stylistic or provenance analyses and their attendant claims about authenticity: “[L]et us sing our own songs, which means the songs that have been given to us, regardless of whose they are or from where they come” (“laulugem omi laule, see tähendab laule, mis on meile antud, küsimata kelle nad on või kust nad tulevad”) (2001: 44). Siitan lays the groundwork for this in his many studies of nineteenth-century Lutheran hymnody in Estonia, which expand upon the earlier work of Elmar Arro (1931, 1981, 2003). Siitan’s work focuses on such important figures as Punschel and Johann August Hagen (1786–1877), the impact of the pietistic revival of the Moravian Brethren, and the aesthetic, social, political, and religious bases of musical reform in the Lutheran churches of tsarist Estland and Livland (see Siitan 1994, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2006).

Another scholar concerned with the aesthetic, religious, and ideological bases of renewal and reform is Anu Kõlar. Kõlar’s work is notable for the ways it addresses questions about the ontology of “church music” by examining musical style, social and political change, Estonian nationalism, confessional and doctrinal differences, and worship practices (2004). The main body of her

work is devoted to the institutions, ideological outlook, and repertoire of the Republican-era EELC in the 1930s. Kõlar shows how musical leaders and EELC elites transformed Estonian Lutheran “church music” by taking it in a “Christian-nationalist direction” (“kristlik-rahvuslikus suunas”) (2002: 180). In keeping with the nationalist ideologies of the interwar Estonian state, the EELC sought to establish itself as an autonomous national Church and divorce itself from the feudal associations of the Baltic German-dominated Lutheran Church (Kõlar 2003b: 59). Kõlar explores the musical, religious, and social dynamics of these processes by looking at how the EELC and its Church Music Secretariat concentrated on organizing religious song festivals, revising hymnals, fostering pedagogy, and raising the level of choirs, congregational singing, and organ playing (2002). What emerged was a passionate discourse about indigeneity and foreignness (read: Germanness) in “church music.” Leaders in the EELC Church Music Secretariat like Johannes Hiob (1907–42), for instance, pushed for the creation of identifiably Estonian “church music” and hymnody that would echo the vernacular national romanticism of concert and secular choral music without resorting to the “sentimentality” of Baptist and other non-Lutheran Protestant musics (Kõlar 2002: 219–21). In these exhaustive studies, Kõlar elaborates the ways in which Estonian “church music” has been and continues to be a locus of national sacrality, nativist ideology, and naturalized or politicized connections between musical styles, religious institutions, and confessional identities.

Another field of Christian practice that has drawn the attention of numerous music scholars is the tradition of Estonian folk hymnody. These popular variations and elaborations on Lutheran chorales are valued for their apparent indigeneity, their Scandinavianness (cf. Bak and Nielsen 2006), their vitality as the traces of a predominately oral religious culture, their compatibility with the methodologies of Estonian folkloristics and ethnomusicology, and for the different possibilities they offer to contemporary performers of traditional, jazz, and improvised musics when compared to other traditional Estonian song genres like *regilaul*. The ways in which folk hymnody circulates reflects these values and reveals the extent to which Christian musics have become commonplace in Estonian musical life and scholarship.

As transcribed and recorded by figures like Cyrillus Kreek in the early twentieth century, Estonian folk hymns emerged in the 1980s from the archives where, in the recent past, they were deemed inappropriate for Soviet ideological reasons and effectively silenced or, in the Republican period, obscured by the nationalist emphasis on folk materials that were considered more authentically Estonian. Since the late 1980s, scholars like Mart Humal and Urve Lippus have looked to folk hymnody and Kreek's arrangements for fresh analytical opportunities (Humal 1989; Lippus 1993b) and insight into the musical consciousness, melodic spontaneity, and spiritual landscapes of Estonians and Estonian Swedes at the turn of the twentieth century (Lippus 1988, 1993a, 2003, 2006). Both Lippus and Helen Kõmmus are interested in the social significance with which scholars invest folk hymnody as well. Because of its thematic content, poetic structure, strophic form, melodic ambitus, and specific tonality, folk hymnody is commonly understood to represent a distinct and more recent layer of Estonian traditional music that emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries through the influence of German-speaking and Swedish Protestantism. In questioning whether folk hymnody is a "religious" or "secular" phenomenon, then, Lippus (2003: 20) and Kõmmus (2001: 77) critically re-frame broader scholarly debates about Estonian identity, archaic musical and cultural forms like *regilaul*, and Protestant-inflected practices assimilated from Scandinavia and German-speaking Europe. If folk hymnody is "religious" and genres like *regilaul* are "secular," then the distinction between what is often championed as an authentic, pre-Christian Estonian heritage and what are viewed as derivative, imposed, or less authentic Christian traditions is maintained. However, if folk hymnody can be considered "secular," then the situation becomes ideologically more complicated (not to mention the possibility of folk hymnody being some third thing that reflects the interdependence of the religious and secular).

Since the late 1980s, Estonian music scholars have done less work outside the Protestant Lutheran mainstream and associated vernacular practices of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with the exception of Heidi Heinmaa's research on Protestant cantors in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Tallinn (1999,

2004). This is in large part due to scholars' personal involvement with the religious musics and histories they study; naturally, scholars can speak as authoritative insiders about the musics they worship with and the religious communities in which they participate. There are social and disciplinary reasons for these currents as well. For instance, very few Estonian music scholars are Orthodox Christians, which is to be expected given the small number of Orthodox Estonians in general. Thus, with the exception of Jelena Gandšu (2002) and Kristi Sarapuu (2003), there is very little Estonian scholarly discourse about Orthodox musics. Furthermore, stereotypes about Orthodox Christianity (it is commonly glossed as "Russian faith" or *ven eusk* in everyday Estonian speech) and the absence of more Russian-speaking scholars who might bring an Orthodox perspective to Estonian scholarly discourses are examples of the social dynamics that shape disciplinary practices.

There are also methodological challenges in working outside of the Protestant Lutheran mainstream. The rigor and comprehensiveness of Estonian music scholars' recent text-centered, structural-historical approaches (see Lippus 2004 for an overview) is difficult to translate when archival sources are few, practices are emerging, institutional affiliations are global and fluid, religious ideologies are difficult to understand or accept, or when particular religious communities are inaudible and invisible in public spaces. Therefore, scholarly engagement with the musics of Estonian evangelicals and Baptists (Paldre 2003) or the changing liturgical musics of Estonian Catholics, Methodists, Baptists, Pentecostals, and Lutherans (Jõks 2003) is noteworthy for its methodological emphasis on practice and the socio-religious dynamics of musical change. What is still much anticipated, however, is a more complete, more ecumenical consideration of Christian musics in Estonia, including the musics of Lutherans, Baptists, Methodists, and Pentecostals, Roman Catholics, Estonian and Russian Orthodox Christians, Russian Old Believers, Ukrainian Greek Catholics, and Armenian Apostolic Christians, all of whom are active in Estonia.

Conclusions

For a host of ideological, political, and personal reasons, Christian musics once again sound in public spaces, provide creative resources for musicians of all kinds, and bring both pleasure and spiritual nourishment to listeners and worshipers in Estonia. Estonian music scholarship has participated in and documented these changes, and scholars' renewed commitment to the study of Christian musics is evidence of the changing ways in which humanistic knowledge is produced in the post-Soviet era. No longer subject to ideological proscription and (self-)censorship, belief, faith, theology, socio- and musico-religious histories, and practices related to divinity have re-emerged as fields of inquiry that are redrawing and, at the same time, obscuring and overcoming disciplinary boundaries in productive ways. As I have suggested here, "church music" has been critical in the reassessment and rewriting of Estonian music histories (see Lippus 1995, 2002), and many scholars have made their careers addressing lacunae in Estonian music scholarship through the study of Christian musics, introducing new methodologies and illuminating new temporal and geographic relationships in the process.

In the wake of the important work that has been done since the late 1980s, the ecumenicity of Christian musics in Estonia is becoming more explicit in music scholarship. What is valuable about an explicit consideration of ecumenicity is the way in which it registers the nuanced dynamics of historical change in Estonian musical and religious life, and the way in which it denaturalizes the alignment of musical styles, confessional categories, ethnolinguistic identities, and religious institutions. Like those engaged in, experiencing, or studying Christian musics and religious renewal in post-Soviet Estonia, Christian sounds, ideas, and believers are necessarily active within ecumenical spaces and at the fluid boundaries of the sacred and secular in society at large.

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Some of the most noteworthy changes to have taken place in Estonian musical life and music scholarship since the late 1980s have centered around Christian musics. Today, leading Estonian music scholars are devoting more and more attention to the study of Christian musics. This move within the musicological disciplines creates continuity with pre-Soviet Estonian musicology and historiography and is clear evidence of broader changes in the post-Soviet production of humanistic knowledge. At the same time, much of this work constructs Estonian identity as essentially Protestant Lutheran, renders fluid confessional categories as concrete institutional entities, naturalizes the alignment of musical style with particular beliefs, practices, and theologies, and is ambivalent in its secular approach to Christian musics.

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Religioossed ja sotsiaalsed muutused eesti muusikaelus ja muusikateaduses

Moned koige tahelepanuvaarsemad muutused eesti muusikaelus ja muusikateaduses alates 1980. aastate lõpust on toimunud seoses kristliku muusikaga. Praegusel ajal puhendavad Eesti juhtivad muusikateadlased uha enam tahelepanu kristliku muusika uurimisele. Kirikumuusika lisamine muusikateaduslike uurimusvaldkondade hulka loob omamoodi jarjepidevuse praeguse ja noukogude perioodi eelse muusikateaduse ja historiograafia vahel. See trend annab tunnistust uldisematest muutustest nõukogude-jargse Eesti humanitaarteadustes.

Suur osa kirikumuusika uurimustest tolgendab Eesti religiooset identiteeti põhiolemuselt luterlikuna ja esitab muutlikke usutunnistusi konkreetsete institutsionaalsete kategooriatena. Samuti kasitletakse uurimustes muusikastiilide tunnuseid lihtsustatult – vaid uhe usu ja selle juurde kuuluvate rituaalide ja teoloogia-te valjendusena. Lisaks tekitab kusimusi uurimustes kasutatud ilmalik lahenemismurk kristlikule muusikale.

Kaesolev artikkel keskendub vaitele, et kristliku muusika oikumeenilisus Eestis on praeguses muusikateaduses kasutatud meetoditele ja institutsionaalsete ideoloogiatele suureks valjakutseks. Oikumeenilisus selle artikli kontekstis margib usutunnistuste vahelist, uldist, universaalset kristlikku muusikat, mis on vastand ainult uhes usulahus praktiseeritavale muusikale. Lahenedes kirikumuusikale oikumeenilisest vaatepunktist, on oluline kaasata mitmeid arutlusi: vastastikused suhted ametlike teoloogiate ja usklike igapaevapraktikate vahel, etnolingvistilise ja religioosse identiteedi toimimine ja mõju, usu ja tunnete valjendamine ning piiri loomine vaimuliku ja ilmaliku sfaari vahel. Ajaloolastele ja etnograafidele on nendes arutlustes osalemine vaga oluline, et moista kristliku muusika vaimset ja sotsiaalset tahtsust Eestis.

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**Reliģiskas un sociālas pārmaiņas igauņijas mūzikas dzīvē
un mūzikoloģijā**

Dažas no vissvarīgākajām izmaiņām kas notika Igaunijas mūzikas dzīvē sākot ar 1980. gadiem saistīti ar Kristīgo mūziku. Vadošie Igaunijas mūzкологи tagad vairāka un vairāk velta uzmanību Kristīgajam mūzikam un tas ne tikai skaidri saistāms ar pre-Padomju historiogrāfiju, bet arī liecina par izmaiņām post-Padomju humanistiskja izziņā. Tanī pašā laikā tas liecina par Igaunijas identitātes Protestant-Luterano būtisko raksturu, interpretē konfeciālas kategorijas kā konkrētas institūcijas un līdzina zināmus mūzikalus stilus ar zināmiem ticības, praktikas un theoloģijas pincipiem, bet tomēr paliek ambivalenti ar savu laicīgo pieeju Kristīgai mūzikai.

Šinī esejā es centīšos pierādīt kā Kristniecības ekumenitāte Igaunijā konkurē ar moderno disciplināro praktiku un zinātnisko ideoloģiju. Šajā kontekstā, ekumenisms piegriežas interkonfesiālam, Katoliskam, zināmu mērā universālam Katolicismam, kas ir kardināli pretējs denominatīvajai Kristīgajai mūzikai. Tas nozīmē lietot ekumenālo pieeju saistot oficiālo theoloģiju ar laicīgo praktiku, etnolinguistisko un reliģisko identitāti un ceļus kādos apvienot reliģisko un laicīgo. Vēsturniekiem un etnogrāfiem šāda pieja ir vitāla pilnīgajai Kristīgas mūzikas izpratnei Igaunijā.

Jeffers Engelhardt

**Estijos muzikinio gyvenimo religiniai bei socialiniai po-
kyčiai ir muzikologija**

Pradedant XX a. 9 dešimtmečiu, ypač reikšmingi Estijos muzikinio gyvenimo ir muzikologijos pokyčiai yra susiję su krikščioniška muzika. Šiandien žymiausi estų muzikologai skiria vis daugiau dėmesio krikščioniškosios muzikos tyrinėjimams. Tokia muzikologijos kryptis atkuria ryšius su ikisovietine estų muzikologija bei istoriografija, kartu patvirtindama, jog esama reikšmingų pokyčių posovietiniuose humanitariniuose moksluose. Tuo pat

metu daugumoje aptariamų darbų estiškoji tapatybė apibrėžiama kaip iš esmės protestantiška liuteroniška. To pasėkoje kintančios konfesinės kategorijos sutapatinamos su konkrečiais instituciniais dariniais, muzikos stiliai susiejami su tam tikrais apribojančiais įsitikinimais, praktikomis ir teologijomis, o patys tyrinėjimai tampa dviprasmiai dėl jų sekuliarios prieitės prie krikščioniškosios muzikos.

Šiame straipsnyje teigiu, kad Estijoje krikščioniškosios muzikos ekumeniškumas ginčija šiuolaikinėje mokslo tradicijoje susiformavusias disciplinines praktikas ir institucines ideologijas. Ekumeniškumas čia suprantamas kaip tarpkonfesinė, katališka ar dar universalesnė krikščioniškoji muzikos plotmė, priešinga denominaciniu požiūriu apribotai muzikai. Taip suprasti ekumeniškumą reiškia imti domėn šiems muzikos reiškiniams būdingą sąveiką tarp oficialiųjų teologijų ir pasaulietinių praktikų, galimybę rinktis ir keisti etnolingvistines bei religines tapatybes, taip pat siekius individualiai išreikšti jausmus ir įsitikinimus. Visa tai ginčija įprastas sakralumo ir pasaulietiško apibrėžtis. Istorikams ir etnografams tokia nuostata yra ypač svarbi, siekiant giliau suprasti ir paaiškinti Estijos krikščioniškosios muzikos dvasinę ir socialinę reikšmę.